



Icebreaker

How can you tell if someone will be a good or bad friend?

Do you have a “bad friend” story to share?

What are the traits you look for in a friend? Or what are some common traits within your circle of friends?

Read 1 Kings 12:1-19 (p. 160)

What do you think of the story? What stands out to you?

Why do you think Rehoboam paid attention to the advice of the young men instead of the advice of the elders?

On Sunday, I somewhat jokingly considered the character traits of Rehoboam’s “bad” friends: They were the same age as he; they grew up with him; they were clearly on his side; but they weren’t wise. Naturally, we are drawn **toward** people who are the same age as we, who grew up with us, who are loyal to us. How are those traits sometimes misleading in a friend?

Rehoboam’s friends played directly toward Rehoboam’s natural desires to surpass his father, to establish himself as strong and secure, and to consider his own needs first. What made the advice of the elders different?

Finally, I claimed that our biggest problem when it comes to friends is that we tend to trust ourselves most of all. Can you think of a time when you truly trusted someone else more than yourself? Can you think of a time when you trusted yourself and your own thoughts more than a friend and it got you into trouble?

Take it Home

An essential “spiritual buddy” relationship that we all need is one of a spiritual mentor or coach. Someone who has the authority to challenge us, rebuke us, and advise us like the wise elders in this story. Do you have one of those? If so, share with the group what that’s like. If not, can you think of someone you’d like to ask to take on that role in your life?

Finally, we could never do a series on friendships without at least mentioning the “friendship” relationship we are supposed to have with the Holy Spirit. Read **John 14:16-17, 14:25-27, 16:7-15** in a few different versions, and share with each other what you think it means to walk with the Spirit of God.



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